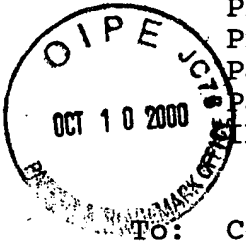


#15

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Re: Continued Prosecution Application of Hall et al.
Present Application Docket No. BLANKET-358/466
Present Application Filed Concurrently
Parent Application Serial No. 09/172,577
Parent Application Filing Date 10/13/98
INERT GAS BLANKET FOR PROTECTION FROM OXIDATION

Attn: Box
CPA
Art Unit 3682
Ex'r C.H. Kim
Prelim. Amdt.



To: Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231:

Please amend the specification of the present application, identified above, as follows:

In the Drawings

Delete FIGS. 1A and 1B as presented in the After Final Amendment filed on September 21, 2000, and insert substitute FIGS. 1A and 1B as appear on the attached drawings sheet.

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REMARKS

Please consider and examine the present patent application, reconsidering the objections and rejections set forth in its parent.

The present amendment more understandingly pictorially illustrates the invention, and is fully supported by the parent specification as filed. No new matter is added.

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesies he extended in a telephone interview held on this October 10th. During the interview, it was agreed that "black box" drawings for FIGS. 1A and 1B would be acceptable. The Examiner explained formal matters. The "vented" limitation was discussed in view of new matter issues: the Examiner stated that a vent was not necessarily inherent, and the undersigned countered that the "overpressure" disclosure in the specification contemplated a vent. The Examiner's comment is invited.

By placing FIGS. 1A and 1B in "black box" form, the objections to the drawings set forth in the 10/02/00 Advisory Action (Paper No. 12) and 06/21/00 Office action (Paper No. 8) are obviated.

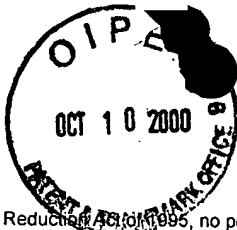
Claims 16, 17, 19, 20, 39, 42, 43, 46, 47, 50, 61-67 are present.

In addition to the discussion in the interview concerning a "vent," it is submitted that, even if a vent were not inherent in all cases and no "overpressure" disclosure was made, a machine such as is claimed is vented or not, and the prior art clearly recognizes vented ones. The Applicant merely selected these clearly recognized ones.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 10, 2000 A.D.

Christopher John Ruff PTO #31873



10-11-00

CPA/6AU-3682 #14

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Approved for use through 09/30/2000. OMB 0651-0032
Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

CONTINUED PROSECUTION APPLICATION (CPA) REQUEST TRANSMITTAL

Submit an original, and a duplicate for fee processing.
(Only for Continuation or Divisional applications under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(d))

CHECK BOX, if applicable:
☐ DUPLICATE

Address to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box CPA
Washington, DC 20231

Attorney Docket No.
of Prior Application

BLANKET-358

First Named Inventor

Hall, R.H.

Examiner Name

Kim, C.H.

Group / Art Unit

3682

Express Mail Label No.

EJ126842482US

This is a request for a ☒ continuation or ☐ divisional application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(d),
(continued prosecution application (CPA)) of prior application number 09 / 172,577
filed on Oct. 13, 1998, entitled INERT GAS BLANKET FOR PROTECTION FROM OXIDATION.

NOTES

FILING QUALIFICATIONS: The prior application identified above must be a nonprovisional application that is either: (1) complete as defined by 37 C.F.R. § 1.51(b), or (2) the national stage of an international application in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371. A Notice will be placed on a patent issuing from a CPA, except for reissues and designs, to the effect that the patent issued on a CPA and is subject to the twenty-year patent term provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 154(a)(2). Therefore, the prior application of a CPA may have been filed before, on or after June 8, 1995.

C-I-P NOT PERMITTED: A continuation-in-part application cannot be filed as a CPA under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(d), but must be filed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b).

EXPRESS ABANDONMENT OF PRIOR APPLICATION: The filing of this CPA is a request to expressly abandon the prior application as of the filing date of the request for a CPA. 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b) must be used to file a continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part of an application that is not to be abandoned.

ACCESS TO PRIOR APPLICATION: The filing of this CPA will be construed to include a waiver of confidentiality by the applicant under 35 U.S.C. 122 to the extent that any member of the public who is entitled under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.14 to access to, copies of, or information concerning, the prior application may be given similar access to, copies of, or similar information concerning, the other application or applications in the file jacket.

35 U.S.C. 120 STATEMENT: In a CPA, no reference to the prior application is needed in the first sentence of the specification and none should be submitted. If a sentence referencing the prior application is submitted, it will not be entered. A request for a CPA is the specific reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 and to every application assigned the application number identified in such request, 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a).

- ☒ Enter the unentered amendment previously filed on September 21, 2000 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 in the prior nonprovisional application.
- ☒ A preliminary amendment is enclosed.
- This application is filed by fewer than all the inventors named in the prior application, 37 C.F.R. § 1.53 (d)(4).
 - ☐ **DELETE** the following inventor(s) named in the prior nonprovisional application:
.....
 - ☐ The inventor(s) to be deleted are set forth on a separate sheet attached hereto.
- ☐ A new power of attorney or authorization of agent (PTO/SB/81) is enclosed.
- Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is enclosed: 10/12/2000 SDUONG 00000004 09172577
 - ☐ PTO-1449
 - ☐ Copies of IDS Citations

355.00 OP
80.00 OP

[Page 1 of 2]

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.4 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Box CPA, Washington, DC 20231.

CLAIMS	(1) FOR	(2) NUMBER FILED	(3) NUMBER EXTRA	(4) RATE	(5) CALCULATIONS
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(c) or (j))		17 -20* =	0	x \$ 18 ⁰⁰ =	\$ 0 ⁰⁰
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(b) or (i))		5 -3** =	2	x \$ 80 ⁰⁰ =	160 ⁰⁰
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS (if applicable) (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(d))				+ \$ 270 ⁰⁰ =	0 ⁰⁰
				BASIC FEE (37 C.F.R. § 1.16)	710 ⁰⁰
				Total of above Calculations =	870 ⁰⁰
Reduction by 50% for filing by small entity (Note 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.9, 1.27 & 1.28).					435 ⁰⁰
* Reissue claims in excess of 20 and over original patent. ** Reissue independent claims over original patent.				TOTAL =	\$ 435 ⁰⁰

6. Small entity status:

- a. ☐ A small entity statement is enclosed, if (b) and (c) do not apply.
 b. ☒ A small entity statement was filed in the prior nonprovisional application and such status is still proper and desired.
 c. ☐ Is no longer claimed.

7. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to credit overpayments or charge the following fees to Deposit Account No. _____:

- a. ☐ Fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16.
 b. ☐ Fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.
 c. ☐ Fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18.

8. ☐ A check in the amount of \$ _____ is enclosed.

9. ☒ New Attorney Docket Number, if desired BLANKET-358/466 (\$55)
 [Prior application Attorney Docket Number will carryover to this CPA unless a new Attorney Docket Number has been provided herein.]

10. a. ☐ Receipt For Facsimile Transmitted CPA (PTO/SB/29A)

b. ☐ Return Receipt Postcard (Should be specifically itemized. See MPEP 503)

11. ☒ Other: PTO/SB/22 w/PTO-2038, plus 2nd PTO-2038 (\$435).

NOTE:

The prior application's correspondence address will carry over to this CPA UNLESS a new correspondence address is provided below.

12. NEW CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

☐ Customer Number or Bar Code Label

or ☐ New correspondence address below

(Insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)

Name

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Country

Telephone

Fax

13. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED

Name (Print /Type)

CHRISTOPHER JOHN RUDY

Signature

Christopher John Rudy

Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)

31,873

Date

October 10, 2000 A.D.